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Mayor Tim Kelly announces senior staff

*Kelly assembles experienced leadership staff from diverse backgrounds
to add new talent at City Hall*

Chattanooga, Tenn. (April 21, 2021) — Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly on Wednesday announced his senior leadership team, drawing together a diverse group of experienced leaders from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors who will execute Kelly's vision for a city that works for everyone.

Kelly's senior staff will begin fulfilling his 100-day plan and work with his transition team, previously announced on Tuesday, to assemble an experienced, capable, and diverse city staff that reflects the community it serves.

"As I promised on the campaign trail, we have put together a talented team with the experience to get the job done, and we have done it while hiring a diverse group of Chattanoogaans who mirror the city we all love," Kelly said. "This team is ready to hit the ground running, and will work hard in service of every resident in every neighborhood."

Kelly's leadership team, of which more than 40 percent are people of color, will be led by Brent Goldberg as chief of staff, and Joda Thongnopnua as chief policy officer.

Goldberg formerly worked as the chief business officer for Hamilton County Schools, and has also previously served as chief operating officer for the city of Chattanooga. In the private sector, he has worked in various leadership roles within the transportation industry. Goldberg is a certified public accountant.

Thongnopnua has served in several executive and senior roles within the nonprofit sector, including as director of strategic initiatives and communications at the Community Foundation, and was executive director of the Metro Ideas Project, an urban policy research organization. In the private sector, he served in a number of creative, strategic and communication roles in the start-up community.

Fulfilling a pledge from his 100-day plan and an early priority, Kelly also announced the hiring of Dr. Mary Lambert as his director of community health. Dr. Lambert is a Chattanooga native who has served in multiple assignments across the nation, including with the assistant secretary of health, the White House, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). She was also deployed in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks and in response to the national capitol anthrax exposure event. She is a retired O-6 from the U.S. Army and U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. Dr. Lambert is currently serving as an associate professor at Vanderbilt University in the school of nursing and has advised Chattanooga's COVID-19 response and approach. She currently serves on the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Health Council.

“Dr. Lambert is one of our nation’s most experienced and thoughtful public health leaders and we are very fortunate to have her in our community,” said Kelly. “Naming an experienced leader to this important position was one of my top priorities and I am looking forward to working with Dr. Lambert to ensure the public is involved in public health.”

The mayor also announced the hiring of several other key positions and named two new interim administrators, including:

- Julia Bursch, deputy chief of staff;
- Ronald Elliott, director of community engagement;
- Maura Sullivan, senior transition coordinator and director of recovery and resilience;
- Ellis Smith, director of special projects;
- Brooke Satterfield, director of policy planning and implementation;
- Chris Anderson, director of innovation delivery and performance;
- Anthony Sammons, interim administrator of economic and community development, and
- Jermaine Freeman, interim deputy administrator of economic development.

“All other current departmental leadership will remain in place in the current structure until June 30,” said Brent Goldberg, Kelly’s chief of staff. “By then, our administration will have had the opportunity to present a new organizational plan and a budget framework to the City Council that aligns with Mayor Kelly’s vision and priorities.”

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